(c) the number of deaths occurred in the nearby regions of Lucknow and Delhi, due to the outbreak of dropsy resulting from adulteration of edible oils and the action taken by Government to check this disease; and

(d) the action being taken by Government to check adulteration of edible oils?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) There have been reports of presence of Argemone Mexicana in edible oils from the State of Uttar Pradesh.

(b) The regions affected are district Lucknow, in Lucknow region, District Kanpur in Kanpur region, District Gonea in Devi Pattan region, District Gorakhpur in Gorakhpur region, District Firozabad in Agra region, District Bareilly in Bareilly region.

(c) Three deaths have occurred in Lucknow city due to outbreak of dropsy resulting from adulteration of edible oils with Argemone Mexicana.

The State Government has intimated that strict surveillance has been initiated and strict measures have been adopted to control the situation. A task force of specialists has been constituted to treat the patients effectively.

(d) Under the Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Rules, 1955, the standards of mustard oil already provides that it shall be free from argemone oil. The State/UTs Governments have been advised from time to time to keep a strict vigil on the quality of mustard oil and to take action as per PFA Rules, 1955, and to alert the public regarding the dangers of consuming adulterated mustard oil.

Adulteration of foodstuffs

1921. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:
SHRI ANAND SHARMA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that 90 per cent of the foodstuffs sold in the unorganised sector is adulterated with dangerous ingredients and even the branded stuff do not necessarily conform to the standards; and

(b) if so, the action Government propose to take to check adulteration of foodstuffs in unorganised sector?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) and (b) As per the latest information available from various Food (Health) Authorities who are enforcing the PFA Act, 1954 in their respective State/UTs, the average percentage of adulteration during the years 1998 to 2002 is 10.30 per cent.

The standards of various food articles have been laid down under the PFA Act, 1954 and Rules framed there under. The tolerance limits for pesticides, chemcials, toxic substances and other contaminants have been laid down under the said rules. Food articles sold in the markets are required to conform to the standards laid down under the provisions of the said rules. The implementation of the PFA Act and Rules is entrusted with the Food (Health) Authorities of the States/U.Ts. The enforcement staff of the States/U.Ts draw random samples of various food articles under the provisions of the said Act and Rules. Action is taken against the offenders where samples of food articles do not conform to the prescribed standards.

The Food (Health) Authorities of the States/U.Ts are advised from time to time to keep a strict vigil on the quality of various food articles being sold in the markets and draw random samples from Manufacturers, Wholesalers and Retailers etc. regularly.

Progress in construction of Medical Research Centre in Raipur

†1922. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Medical Research Centre is being opened in Raipur, Chhattisgarh on the lines of All India Institute of Medical Sciences;

(b) the progress made in this regard, so far; and

(c) by when the said task is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY), it is proposed to set up one AIIMS-like institution each in the States of Bihar (Patna), Chhattisgarh

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.